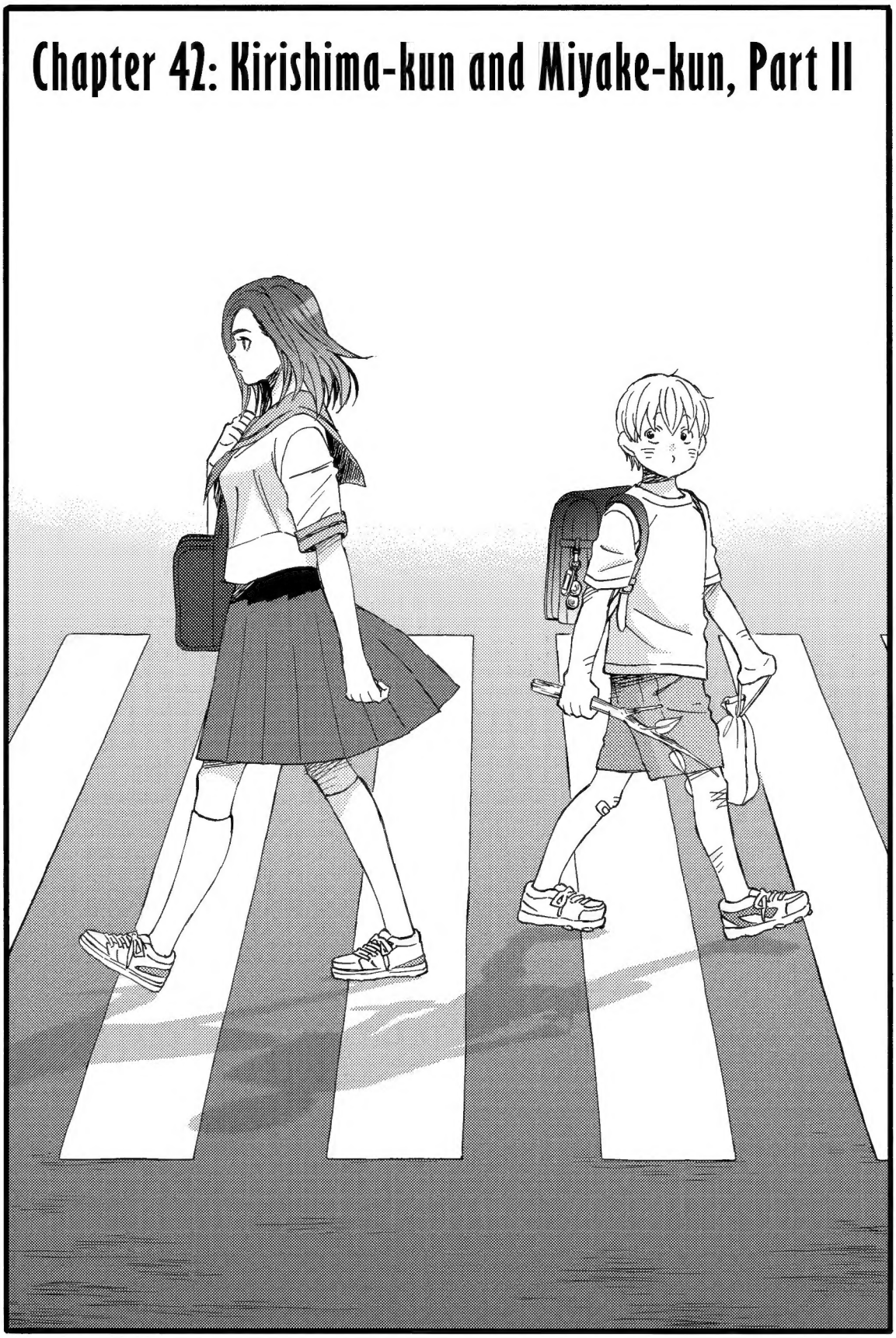
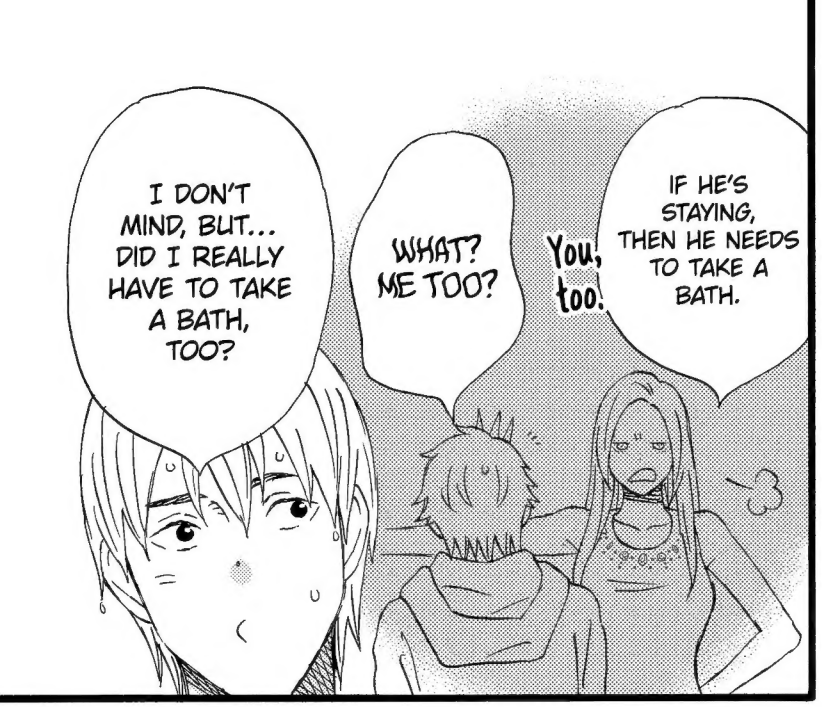
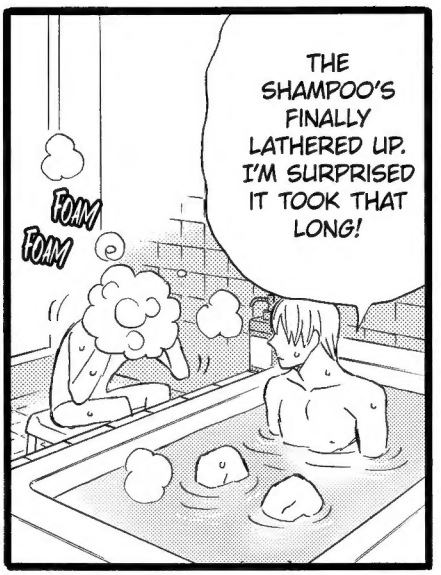
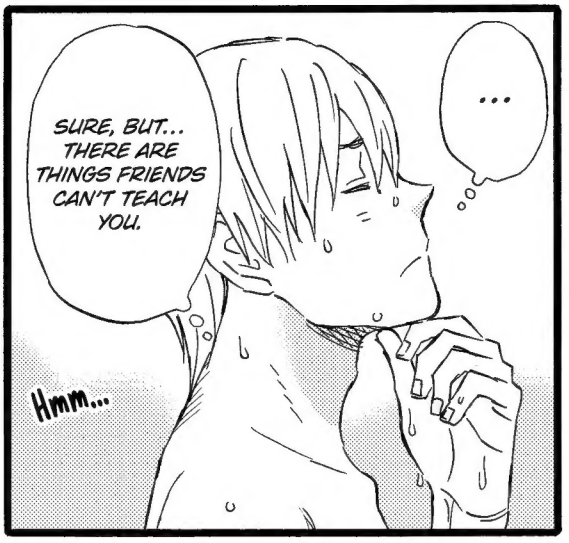
Chapter 42: Kirishima-kun and Miyake-kun, Part II

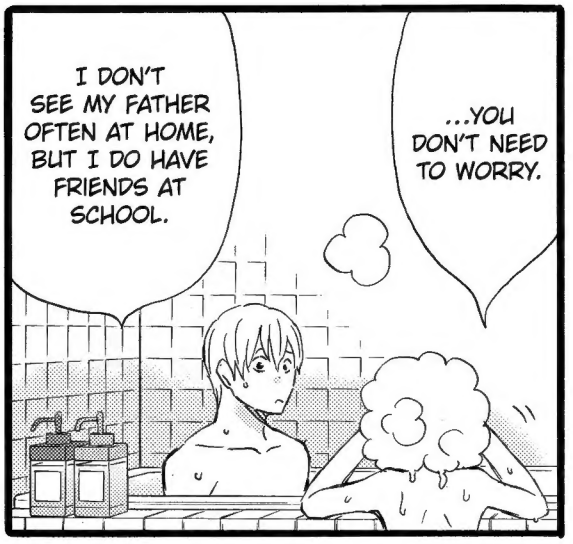


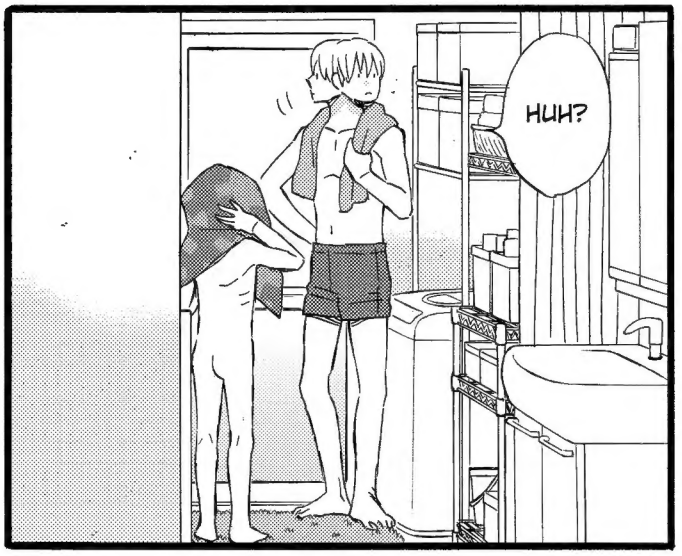
Hair Shampoo
600ml
Foam
モコ
Foam
モコ
OHH...!

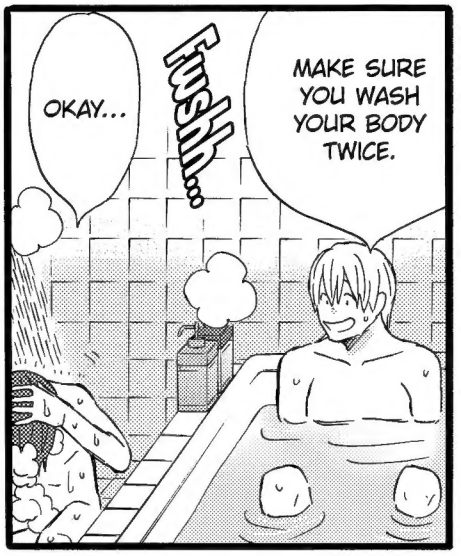

I DON'T MIND, BUT... DID I REALLY HAVE TO TAKE A BATH, TOO?
WHAT? ME TOO?
You, too.
IF HE'S STAYING, THEN HE NEEDS TO TAKE A BATH.

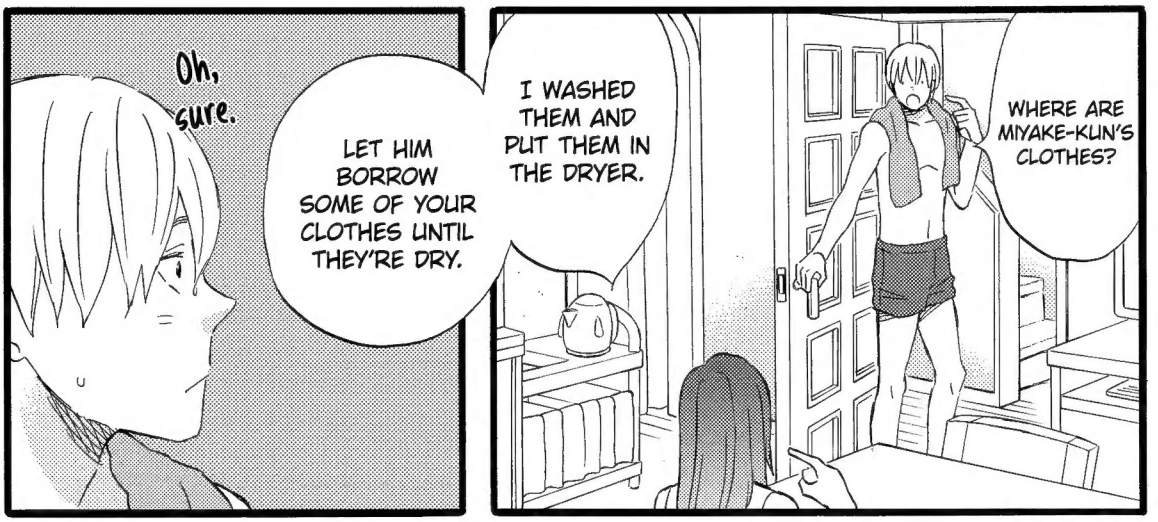

THE SHAMPOO'S FINALLY LATHERED UP. I'M SURPRISED IT TOOK THAT LONG!
FOAM
FOAM

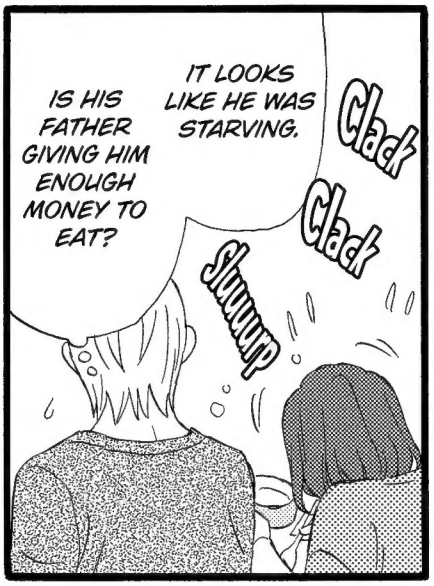

...
SURE, BUT... THERE ARE THINGS FRIENDS CAN'T TEACH YOU.
Hmm...


I DON'T SEE MY FATHER OFTEN AT HOME, BUT I DO HAVE FRIENDS AT SCHOOL.
...YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY.


HUH?

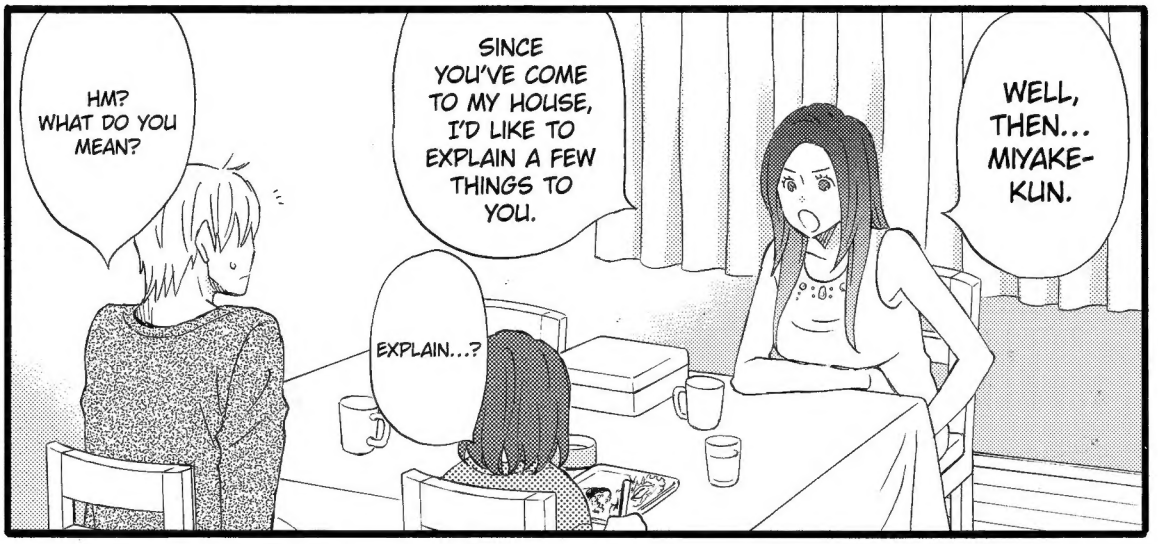

OKAY...
fwsh...
MAKE SURE YOU WASH YOUR BODY TWICE.

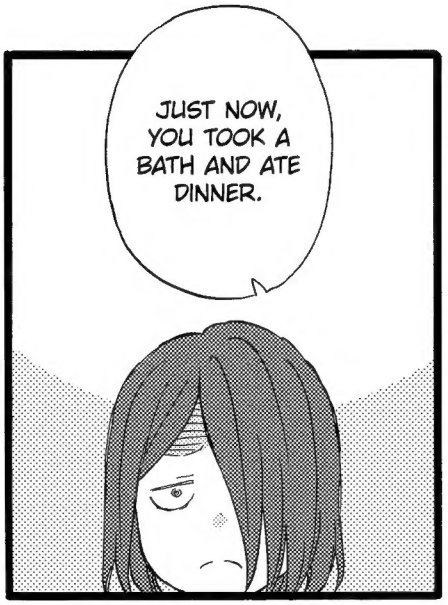

Oh, sure.
LET HIM BORROW SOME OF YOUR CLOTHES UNTIL THEY'RE DRY.
I WASHED THEM AND PUT THEM IN THE DRYER.
WHERE ARE MIYAKE-KUN'S CLOTHES?

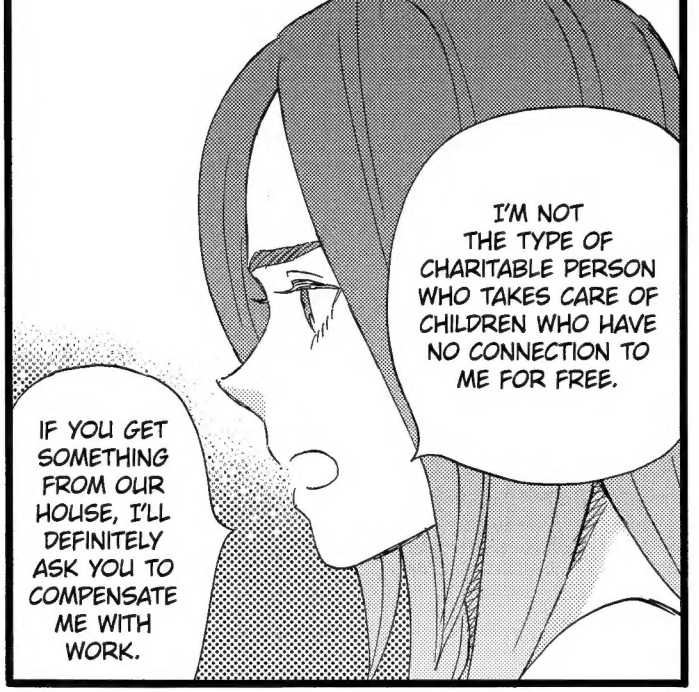

IS HIS FATHER GIVING HIM ENOUGH MONEY TO EAT?
IT LOOKS LIKE HE WAS STARVING.
Clack
Clack
Shuuuup

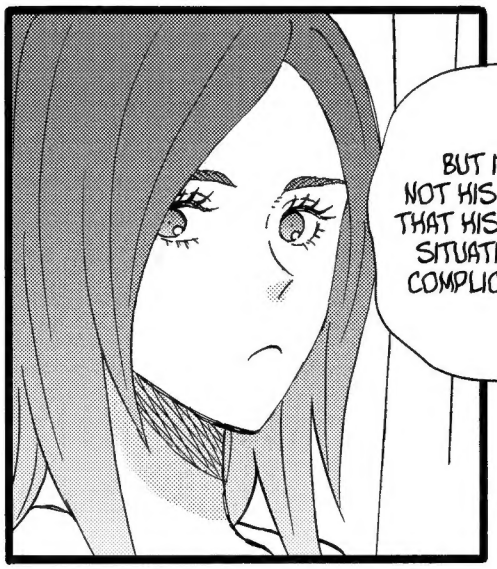
...Thank you.

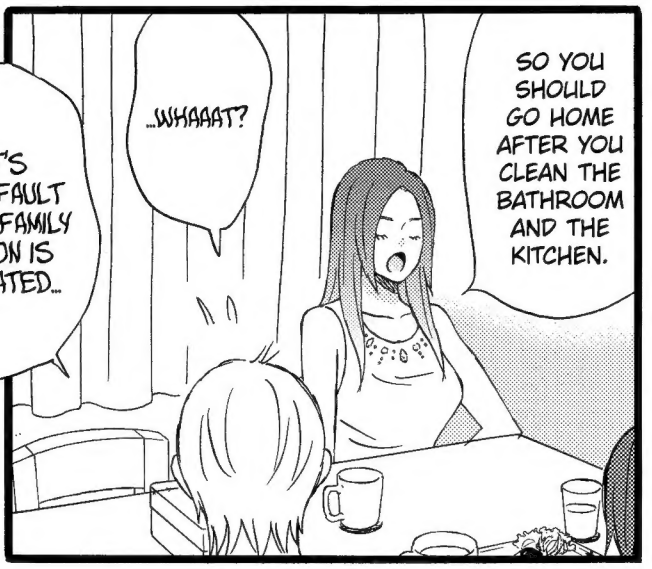
I MADE YOU DINNER. IT ISN'T FANCY, BUT I HOPE YOU LIKE IT.


HM? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
SINCE YOU'VE COME TO MY HOUSE, I'D LIKE TO EXPLAIN A FEW THINGS TO YOU.
WELL, THEN... MIYAKE-KUN.
EXPLAIN...?

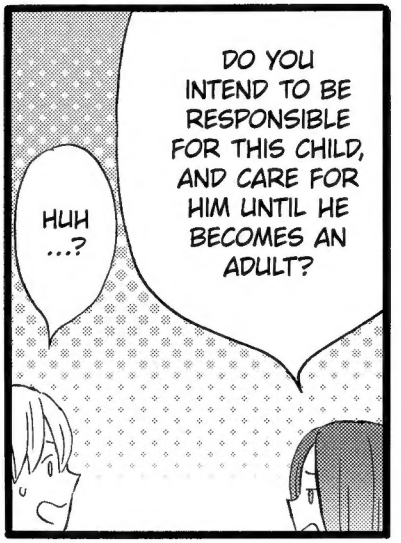

JUST NOW, YOU TOOK A BATH AND ATE DINNER.

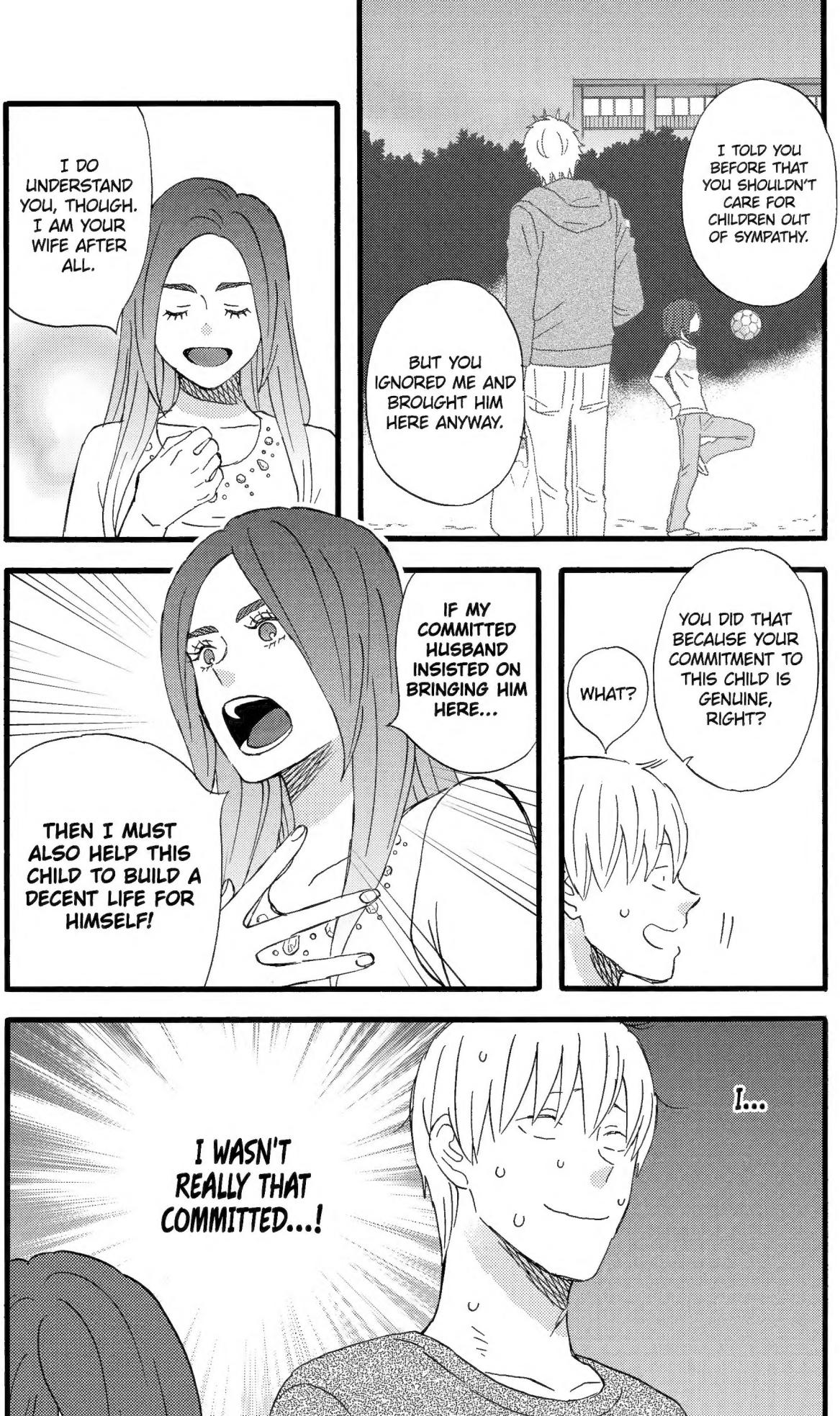

I'M NOT THE TYPE OF CHARITABLE PERSON WHO TAKES CARE OF CHILDREN WHO HAVE NO CONNECTION TO ME FOR FREE.
IF YOU GET SOMETHING FROM OUR HOUSE, I'LL DEFINITELY ASK YOU TO COMPENSATE ME WITH WORK.


BUT IT'S NOT HIS FAULT THAT HIS FAMILY SITUATION IS COMPLICATED...

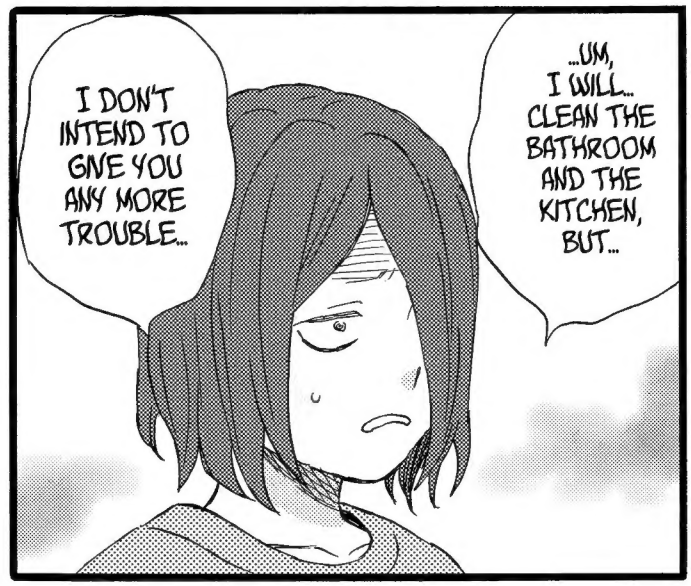

...WHAAAT?
SO YOU SHOULD GO HOME AFTER YOU CLEAN THE BATHROOM AND THE KITCHEN.

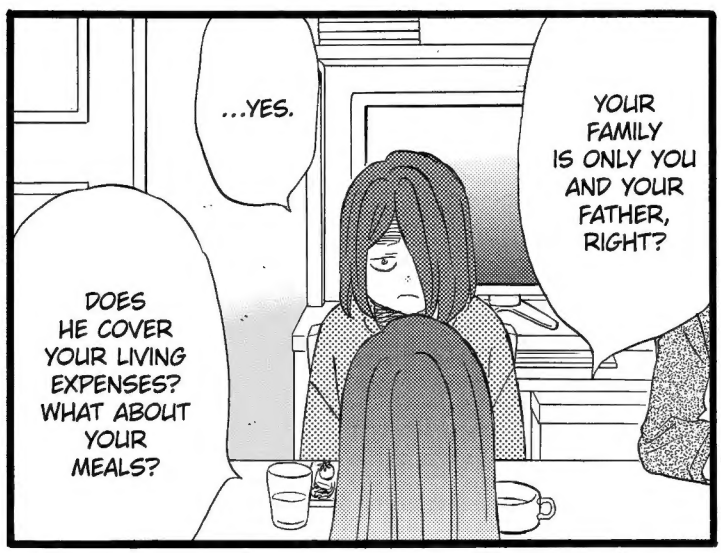
...
IF YOU JUST BROUGHT HIM HERE ON A WHIM BECAUSE YOU FELT SORRY FOR HIM...
THEN SEND HIM BACK TO WHERE HE BELONGS RIGHT NOW AND DON'T BRING HIM HERE AGAIN.

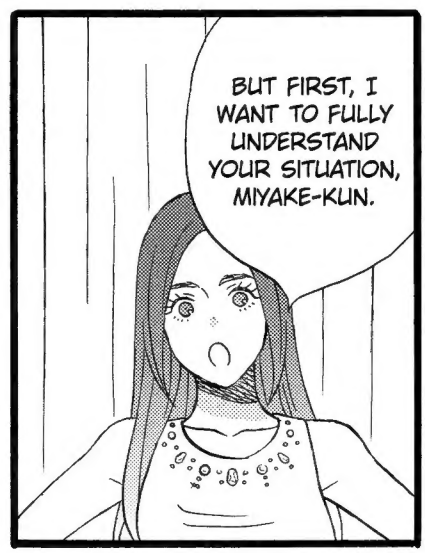

DO YOU INTEND TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS CHILD, AND CARE FOR HIM UNTIL HE BECOMES AN ADULT?
HUH ...?

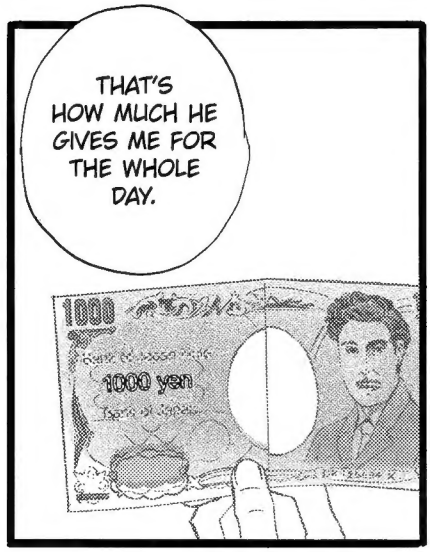

I TOLD YOU BEFORE THAT YOU SHOULDN'T CARE FOR CHILDREN OUT OF SYMPATHY.
BUT YOU IGNORED ME AND BROUGHT HIM HERE ANYWAY.
I DO UNDERSTAND YOU, THOUGH. I AM YOUR WIFE AFTER ALL.
YOU DID THAT BECAUSE YOUR COMMITMENT TO THIS CHILD IS GENUINE, RIGHT?
WHAT?
IF MY COMMITTED HUSBAND INSISTED ON BRINGING HIM HERE...
THEN I MUST ALSO HELP THIS CHILD TO BUILD A DECENT LIFE FOR HIMSELF!
I...
I WASN'T REALLY THAT COMMITTED...!

JUST LISTEN TO WHAT WE HAVE TO SAY AND DECIDE FOR YOURSELF.
OF COURSE. IT'S ENTIRELY UP TO YOU WHETHER YOU WANT US TO HELP YOU.

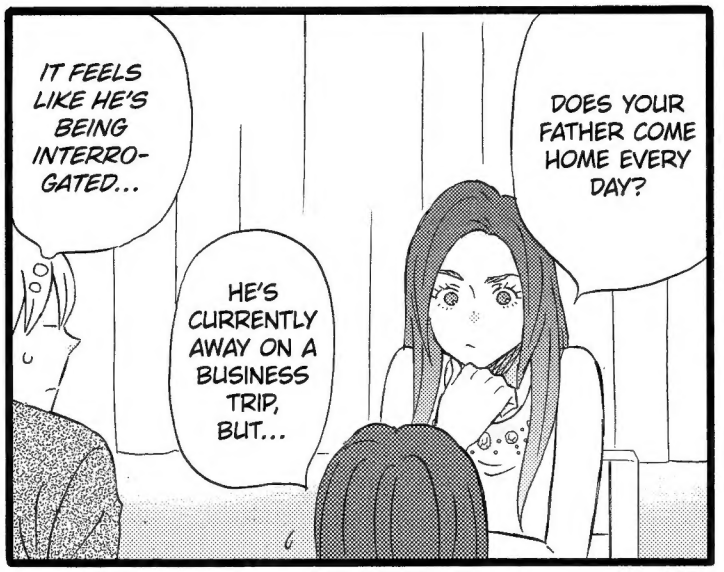

I DON'T INTEND TO GIVE YOU ANY MORE TROUBLE...
...UM, I WILL... CLEAN THE BATHROOM AND THE KITCHEN, BUT...


...YES.
YOUR FAMILY IS ONLY YOU AND YOUR FATHER, RIGHT?
DOES HE COVER YOUR LIVING EXPENSES? WHAT ABOUT YOUR MEALS?

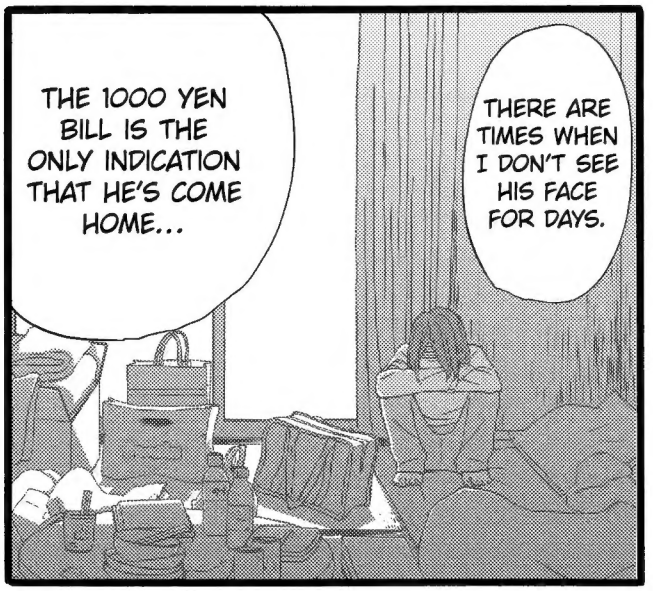

BUT FIRST, I WANT TO FULLY UNDERSTAND YOUR SITUATION, MIYAKE-KUN.


THAT'S HOW MUCH HE GIVES ME FOR THE WHOLE DAY.
1000
1000 yen

WHEN I WAKE UP, THERE'S ALWAYS A 1000 YEN BILL ON THE TABLE.
ABOUT MY LIVING EXPENSES...

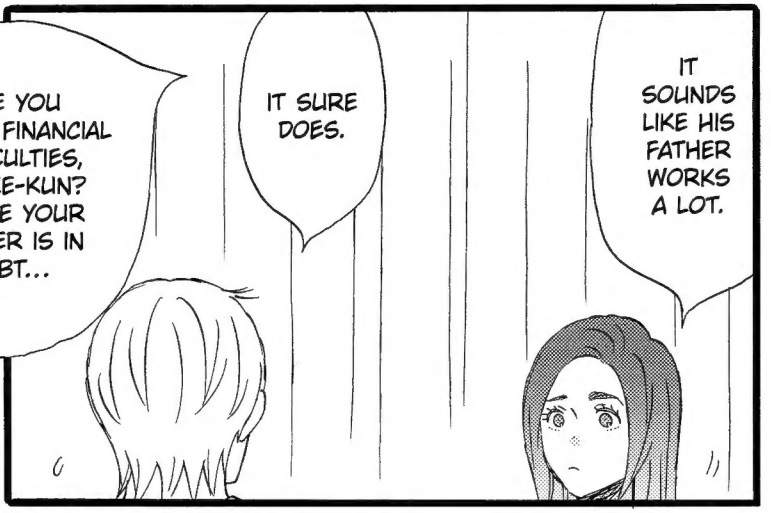

IT FEELS LIKE HE'S BEING INTERROGATED...
HE'S CURRENTLY AWAY ON A BUSINESS TRIP, BUT...
DOES YOUR FATHER COME HOME EVERY DAY?

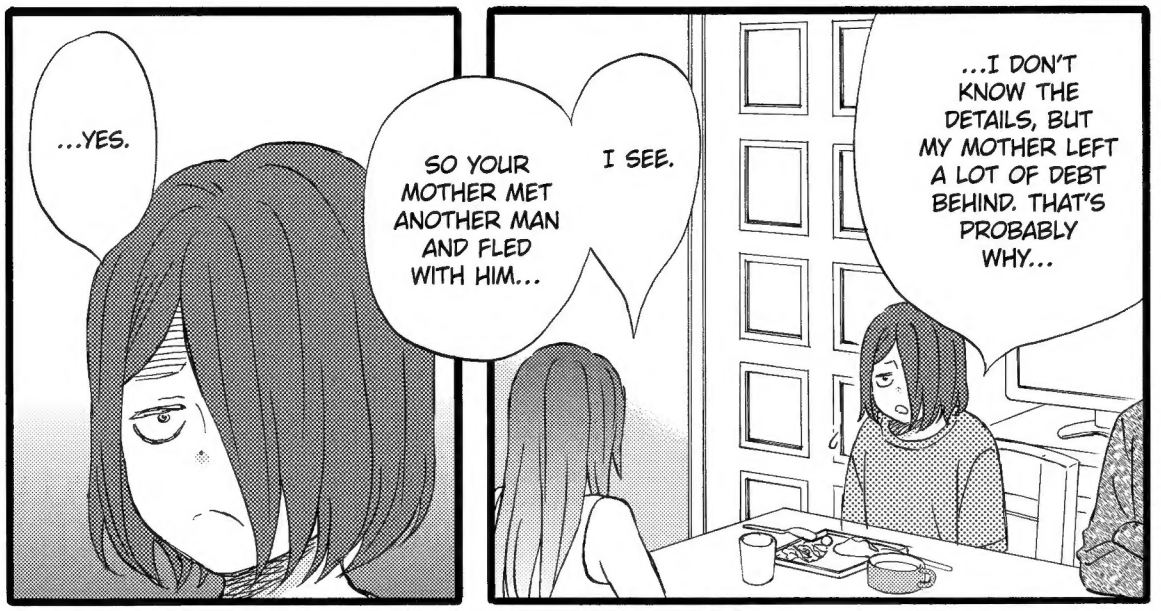
I USUALLY GET MY FOOD FROM THE CONVENIENCE STORE...
HRM, I SEE.

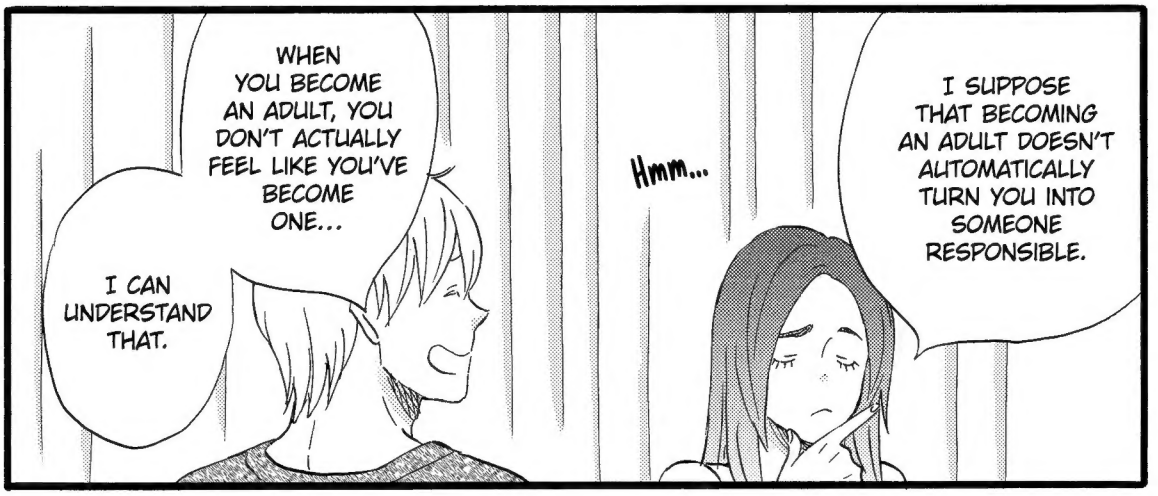

THE 1000 YEN BILL IS THE ONLY INDICATION THAT HE'S COME HOME...
THERE ARE TIMES WHEN I DON'T SEE HIS FACE FOR DAYS.

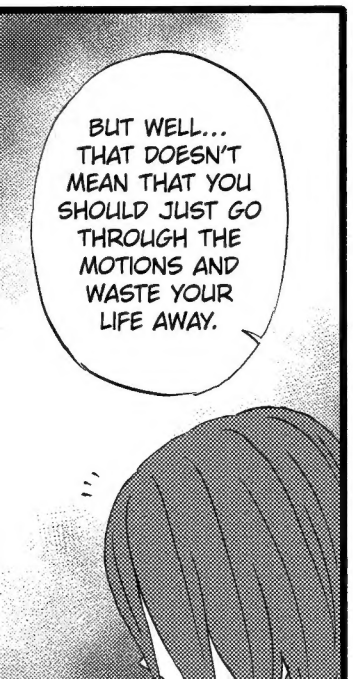
HE USUALLY COMES HOME LATE AT NIGHT...
AND LEAVES EARLY IN THE MORNING.

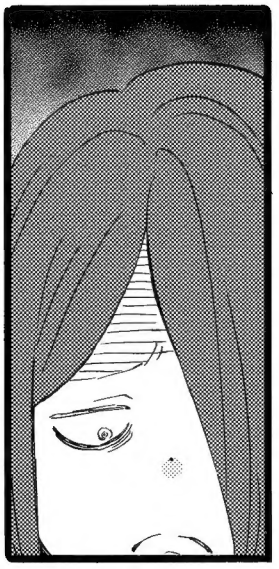
I DON'T THINK THAT'S SOMETHING YOU ASK A KID...
Always straight to the point...

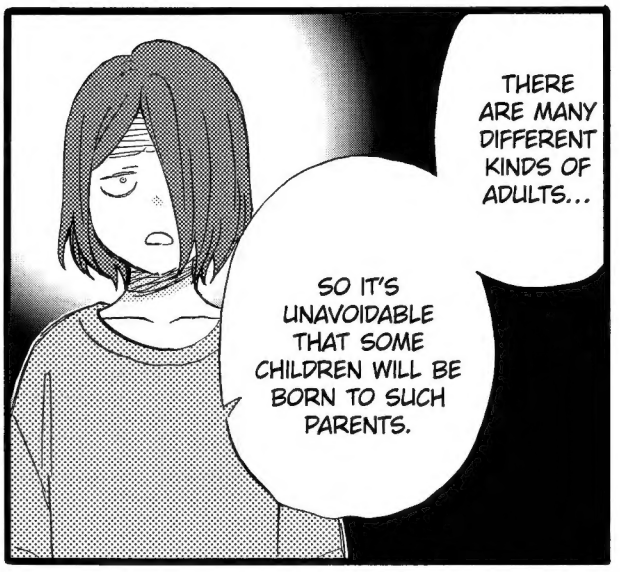

ARE YOU HAVING FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES, MIYAKE-KUN? MAYBE YOUR FATHER IS IN DEBT...
IT SURE DOES.
IT SOUNDS LIKE HIS FATHER WORKS A LOT.

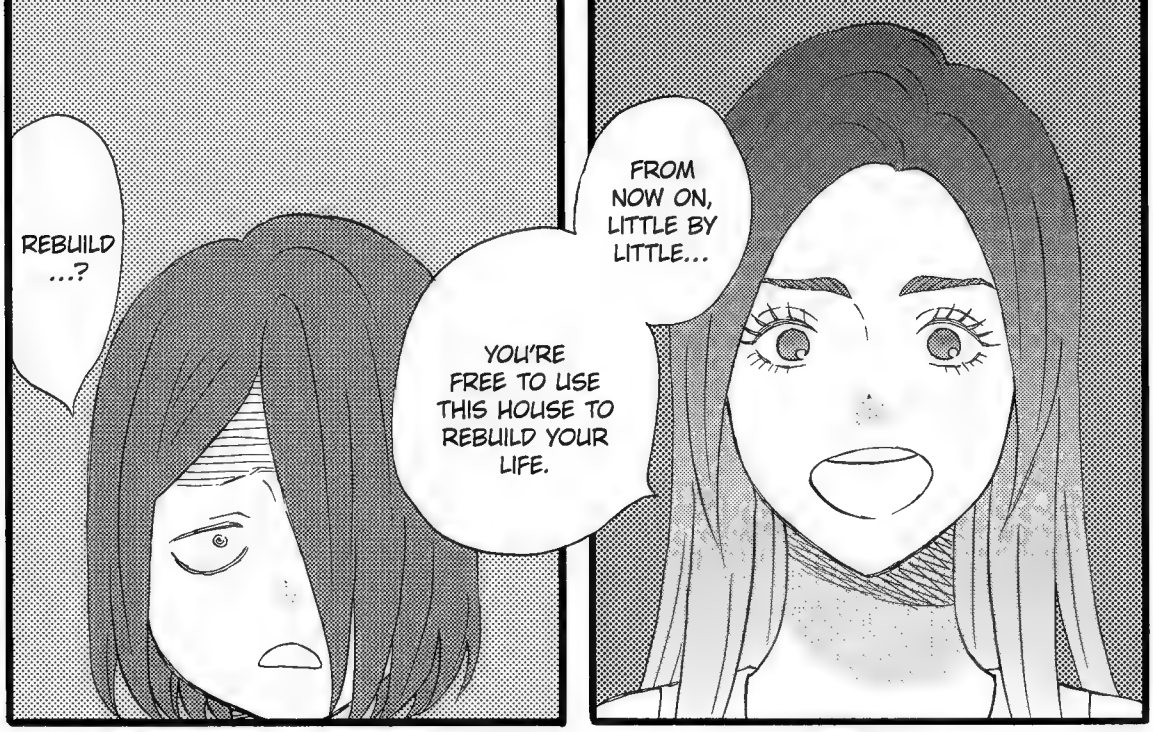

...YES.
SO YOUR MOTHER MET ANOTHER MAN AND FLED WITH HIM...
I SEE.
...I DON'T KNOW THE DETAILS, BUT MY MOTHER LEFT A LOT OF DEBT BEHIND. THAT'S PROBABLY WHY...

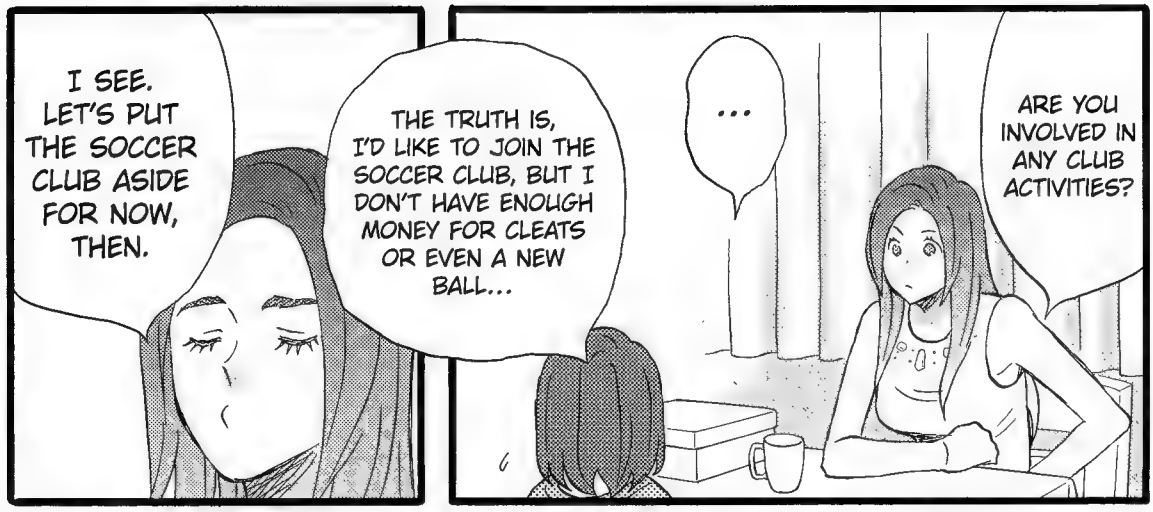

WHEN YOU BECOME AN ADULT, YOU DON'T ACTUALLY FEEL LIKE YOU'VE BECOME ONE...
I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT.
Hmm...
I SUPPOSE THAT BECOMING AN ADULT DOESN'T AUTOMATICALLY TURN YOU INTO SOMEONE RESPONSIBLE.


BUT WELL... THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT YOU SHOULD JUST GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS AND WASTE YOUR LIFE AWAY.



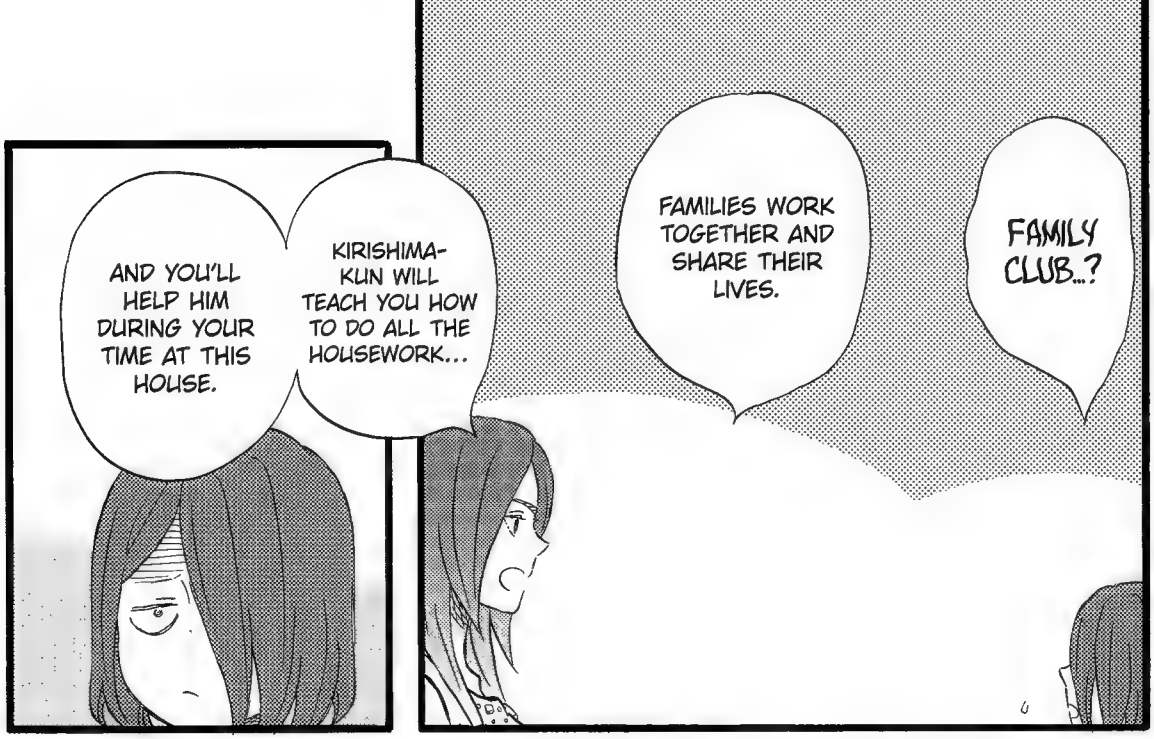

THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT KINDS OF ADULTS...
SO IT'S UNAVOIDABLE THAT SOME CHILDREN WILL BE BORN TO SUCH PARENTS.


REBUILD ...?
FROM NOW ON, LITTLE BY LITTLE...
YOU'RE FREE TO USE THIS HOUSE TO REBUILD YOUR LIFE.

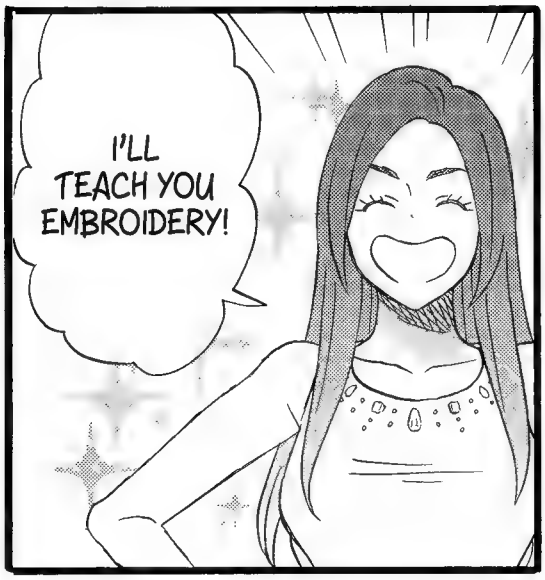

I SEE. LET'S PUT THE SOCCER CLUB ASIDE FOR NOW, THEN.
THE TRUTH IS, I'D LIKE TO JOIN THE SOCCER CLUB, BUT I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY FOR CLEATS OR EVEN A NEW BALL...
...
ARE YOU INVOLVED IN ANY CLUB ACTIVITIES?

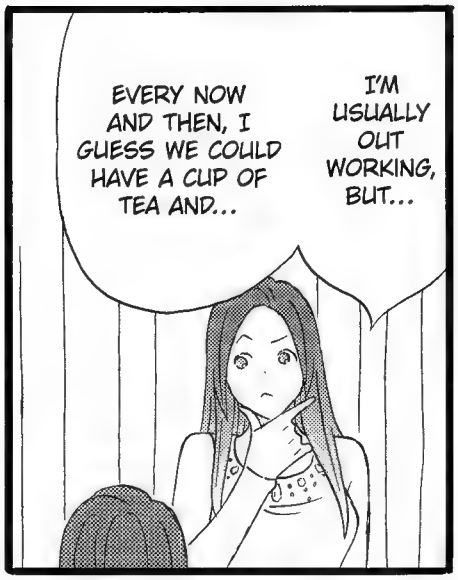
HERE, YOU'LL SPEND TIME TOGETHER WITH ME AND KIRISHIMA-KUN! I CALL IT THE "FAMILY CLUB"!

INSTEAD, YOU'LL BE DOING A DIFFERENT CLUB ACTIVITY AT THIS HOUSE.
CLUB ACTIVITY ...?
THAT'S RIGHT.

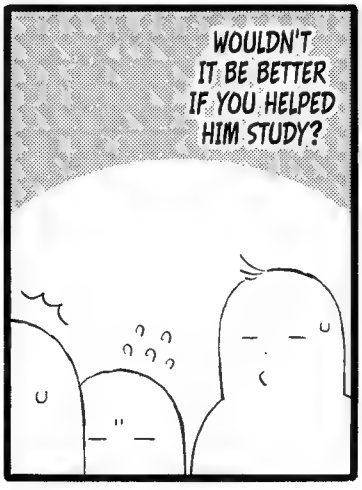

FAMILY CLUB...?
FAMILIES WORK TOGETHER AND SHARE THEIR LIVES.
KIRISHIMA-KUN WILL TEACH YOU HOW TO DO ALL THE HOUSEWORK...
AND YOU'LL HELP HIM DURING YOUR TIME AT THIS HOUSE.

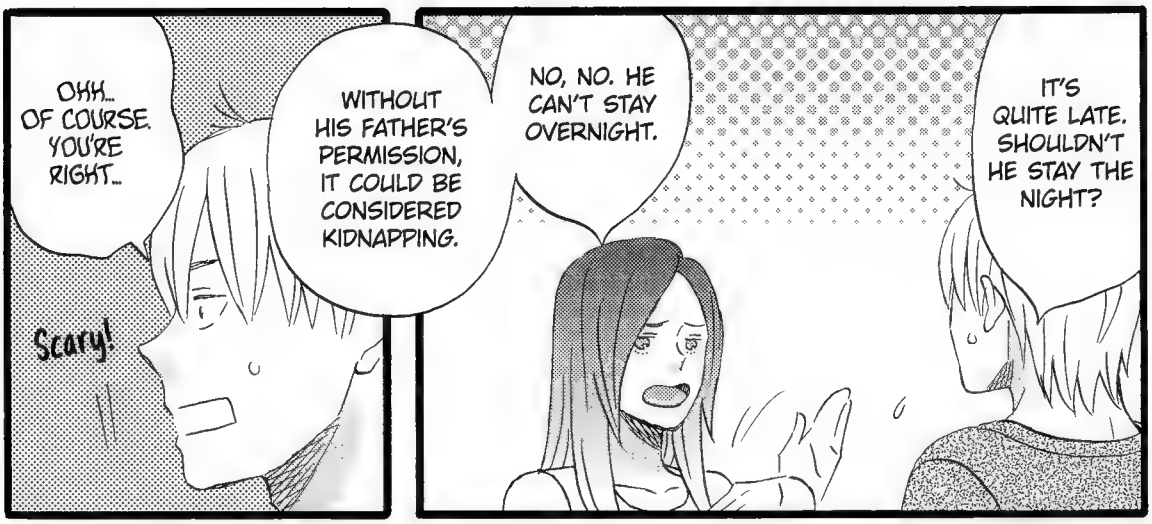
Embroidery...

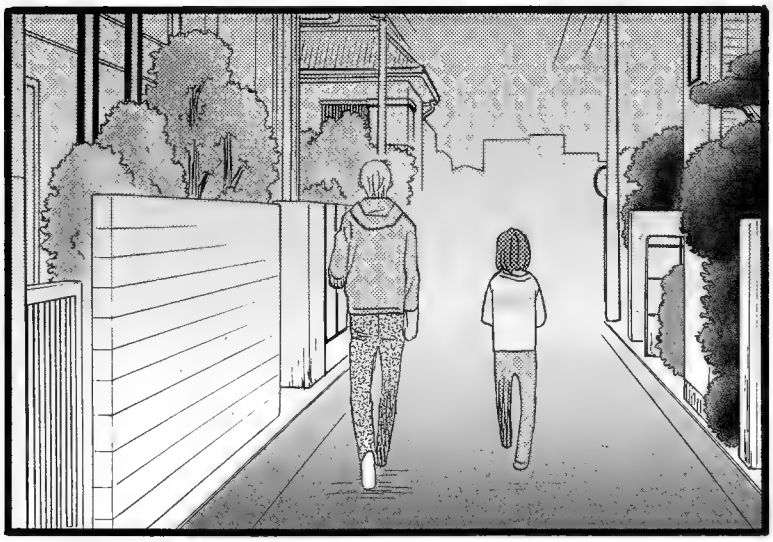

I'LL TEACH YOU EMBROIDERY!


I'M USUALLY OUT WORKING, BUT...
EVERY NOW AND THEN, I GUESS WE COULD HAVE A CUP OF TEA AND...

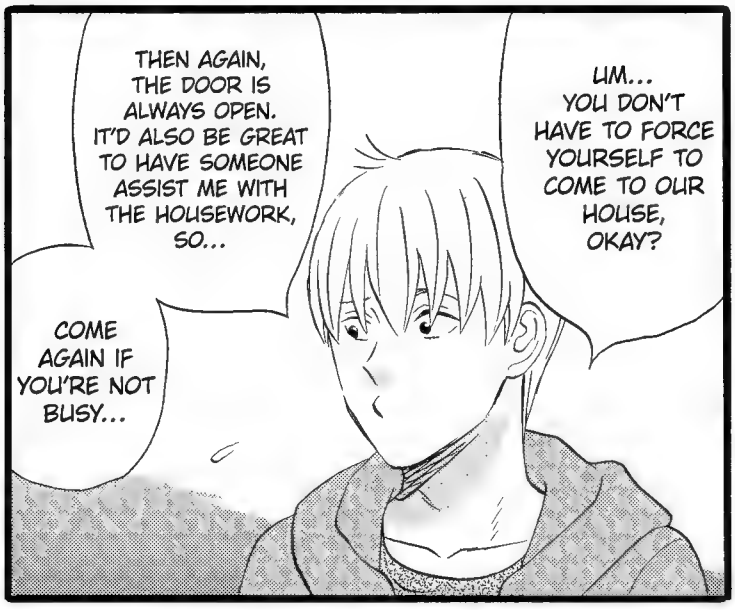
ANYWAY...
YOUR CLOTHES SHOULD BE DRY BY NOW, SO CLEAN UP THE BATHROOM AND KITCHEN AND GO HOME.

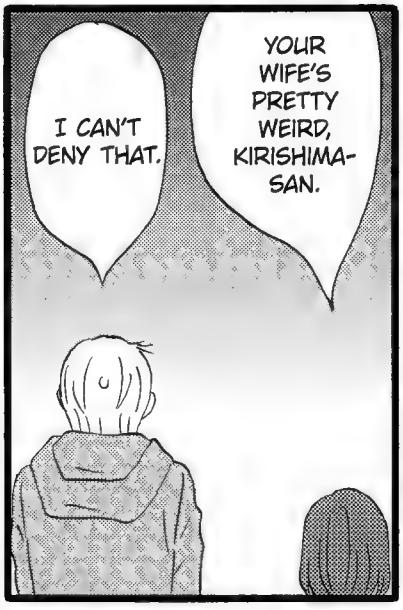

WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER IF YOU HELPED HIM STUDY?


OHH... OF COURSE. YOU'RE RIGHT...
WITHOUT HIS FATHER'S PERMISSION, IT COULD BE CONSIDERED KIDNAPPING.
Scary!
NO, NO. HE CAN'T STAY OVERNIGHT.
IT'S QUITE LATE. SHOULDN'T HE STAY THE NIGHT?



MAKE SURE YOU WALK HIM ALL THE WAY HOME.


THEN AGAIN, THE DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN. IT'D ALSO BE GREAT TO HAVE SOMEONE ASSIST ME WITH THE HOUSEWORK, SO...
UM... YOU DON'T HAVE TO FORCE YOURSELF TO COME TO OUR HOUSE, OKAY?
COME AGAIN IF YOU'RE NOT BUSY...


I CAN'T DENY THAT.
YOUR WIFE'S PRETTY WEIRD, KIRISHIMA-SAN.

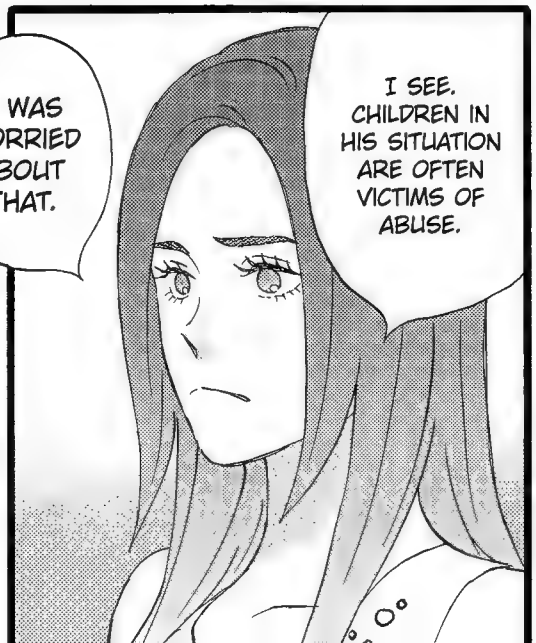
...I'LL THINK ABOUT IT.

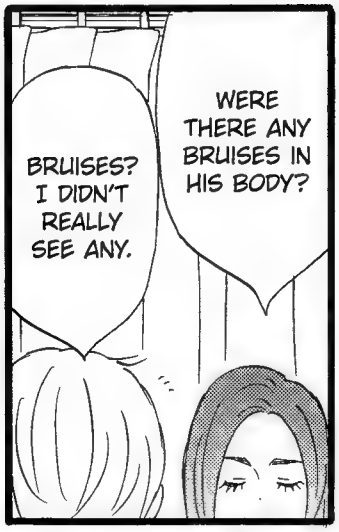
...

HM...
I BROUGHT HIM HERE WITHOUT PERMISSION.

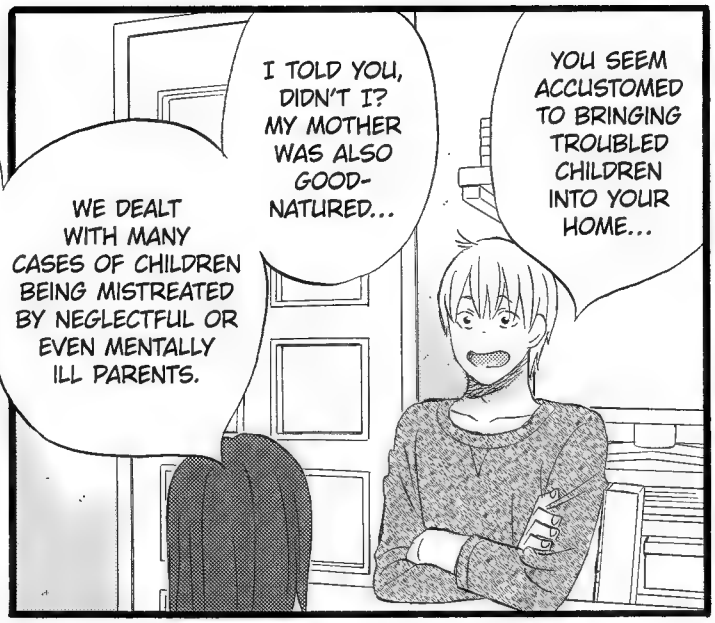
...I HAVE TO APOLOGIZE...

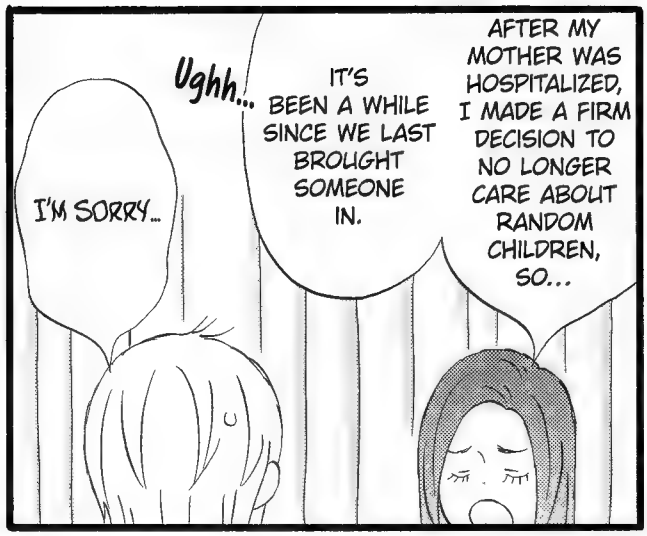
SO THAT'S WHY SHE HAD ME TAKE A BATH WITH HIM...


I WAS WORRIED ABOUT THAT.
I SEE. CHILDREN IN HIS SITUATION ARE OFTEN VICTIMS OF ABUSE.


WERE THERE ANY BRUISES IN HIS BODY?
BRUISES? I DIDN'T REALLY SEE ANY.

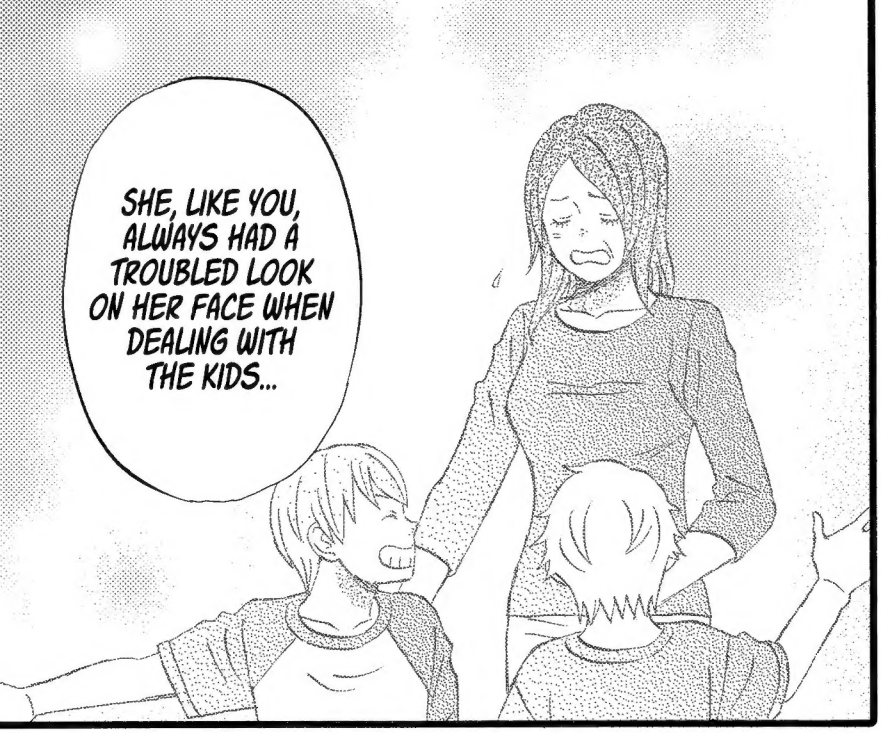
MY HOUSE FELT LIKE A NURSERY SCHOOL SOMETIMES.

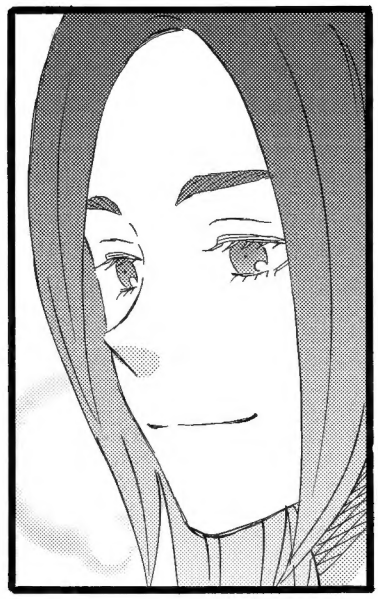

YOU SEEM ACCUSTOMED TO BRINGING TROUBLED CHILDREN INTO YOUR HOME...
I TOLD YOU, DIDN'T I? MY MOTHER WAS ALSO GOOD-NATURED...
WE DEALT WITH MANY CASES OF CHILDREN BEING MISTREATED BY NEGLECTFUL OR EVEN MENTALLY ILL PARENTS.

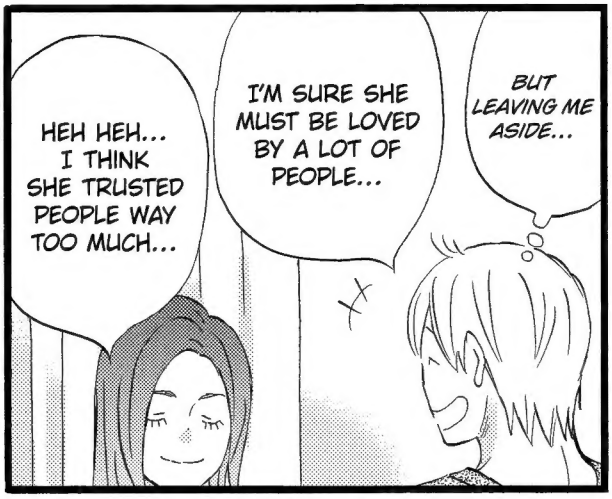

AFTER MY MOTHER WAS HOSPITALIZED, I MADE A FIRM DECISION TO NO LONGER CARE ABOUT RANDOM CHILDREN, SO...
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE WE LAST BROUGHT SOMEONE IN.
Ughh...
I'M SORRY...

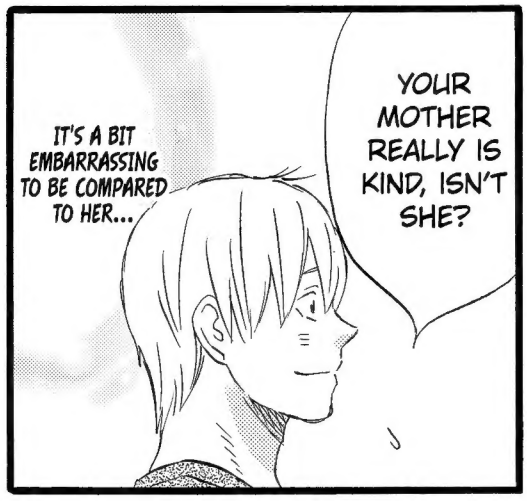
OH... SO THE "FAMILY CLUB" ISN'T SOMETHING YOU MADE UP JUST NOW.
There's a story behind it.
YEAH... YOU COULD CALL IT A DESPERATE MEASURE TO AVOID BEING UNILATERALLY EXPLOITED.

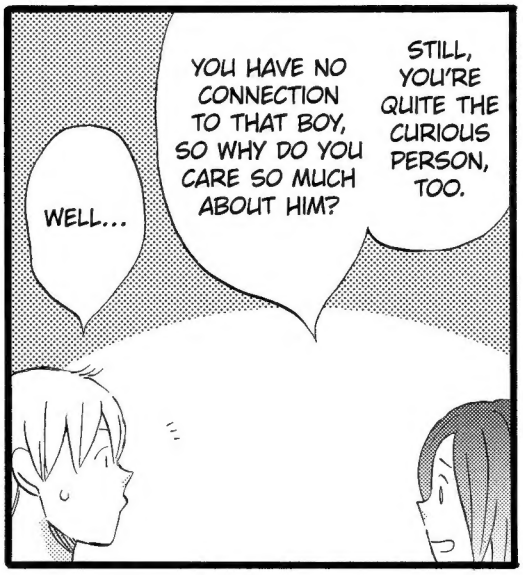
WELL... IT MADE ME REMEMBER SOMETHING FROM WHEN MY MOTHER WAS HEALTHY...
HUH...?

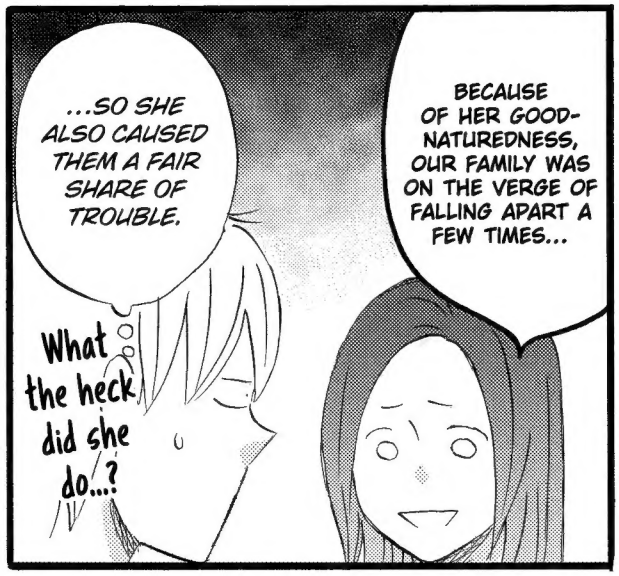

SHE, LIKE YOU, ALWAYS HAD A TROUBLED LOOK ON HER FACE WHEN DEALING WITH THE KIDS...

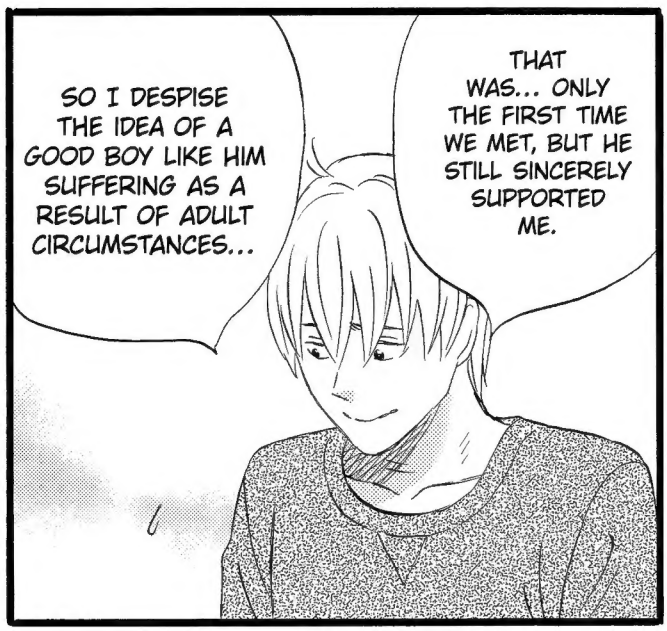


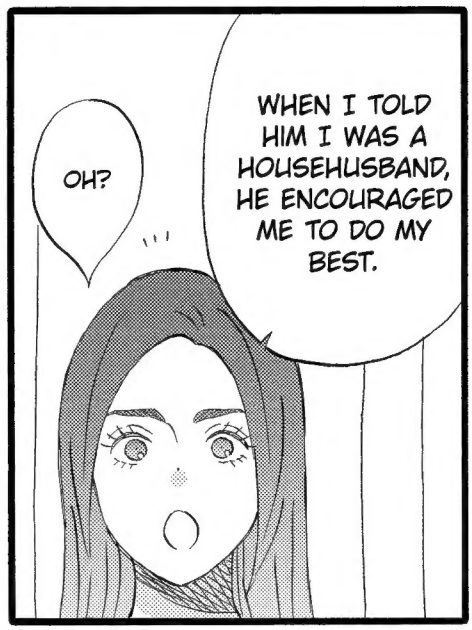

HEH HEH... I THINK SHE TRUSTED PEOPLE WAY TOO MUCH...
I'M SURE SHE MUST BE LOVED BY A LOT OF PEOPLE...
BUT LEAVING ME ASIDE...


IT'S A BIT EMBARRASSING TO BE COMPARED TO HER...
YOUR MOTHER REALLY IS KIND, ISN'T SHE?

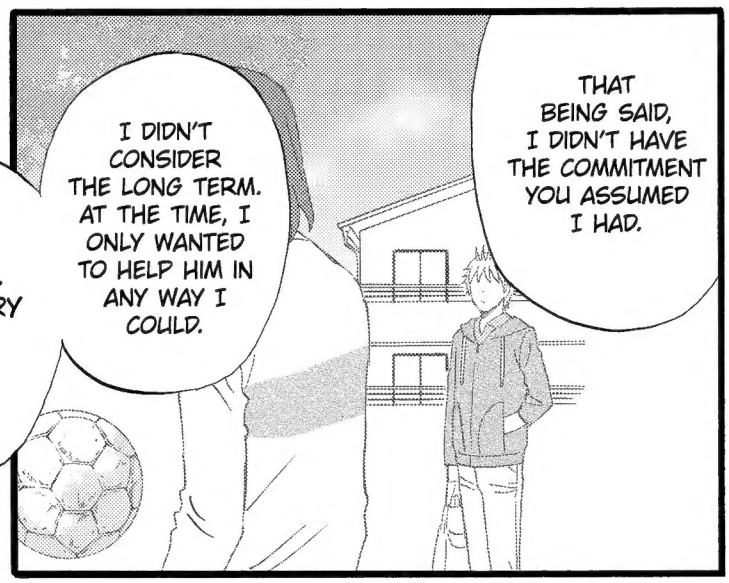

WELL...
YOU HAVE NO CONNECTION TO THAT BOY, SO WHY DO YOU CARE SO MUCH ABOUT HIM?
STILL, YOU'RE QUITE THE CURIOUS PERSON, TOO.


...SO SHE ALSO CAUSED THEM A FAIR SHARE OF TROUBLE.
What the heck did she do...?
BECAUSE OF HER GOOD-NATUREDNESS, OUR FAMILY WAS ON THE VERGE OF FALLING APART A FEW TIMES...

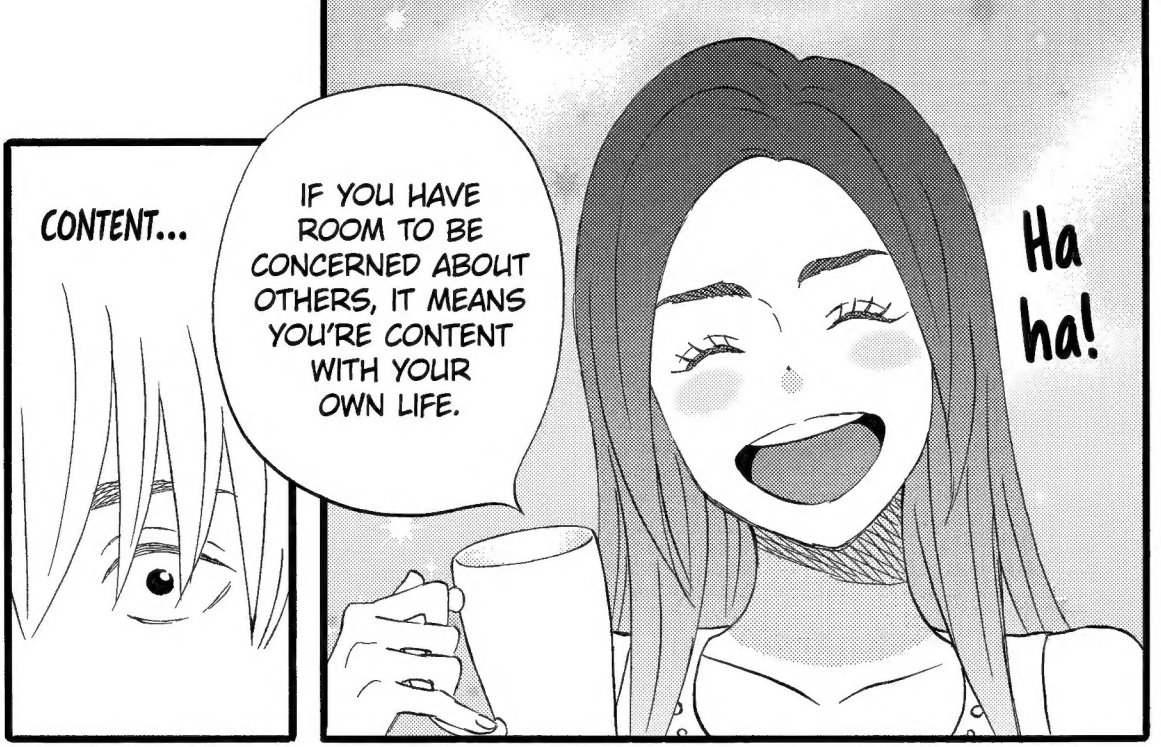

SO I DESPISE THE IDEA OF A GOOD BOY LIKE HIM SUFFERING AS A RESULT OF ADULT CIRCUMSTANCES...
THAT WAS... ONLY THE FIRST TIME WE MET, BUT HE STILL SINCERELY SUPPORTED ME.

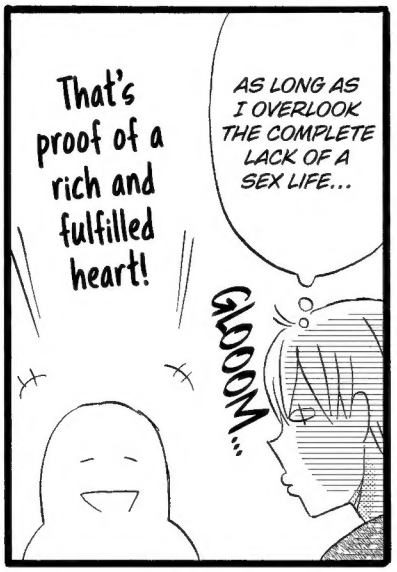

OH?
WHEN I TOLD HIM I WAS A HOUSEHUSBAND, HE ENCOURAGED ME TO DO MY BEST.

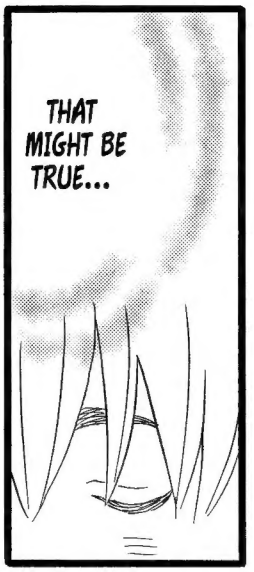
TRULY... I'M SORRY ABOUT THIS...

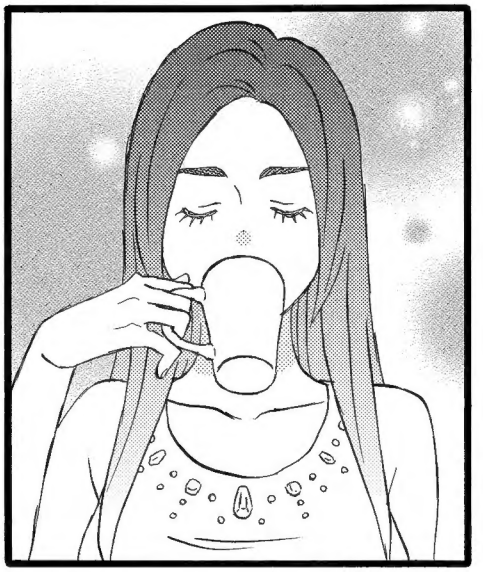

I DIDN'T CONSIDER THE LONG TERM. AT THE TIME, I ONLY WANTED TO HELP HIM IN ANY WAY I COULD.
THAT BEING SAID, I DIDN'T HAVE THE COMMITMENT YOU ASSUMED I HAD.

I DON'T THINK IT'S A BAD THING TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT SOMEONE ELSE.
...
It feels weird...
I HAVE TO WONDER... HAVE I ALWAYS BEEN THIS MUCH OF A GOOD GUY?

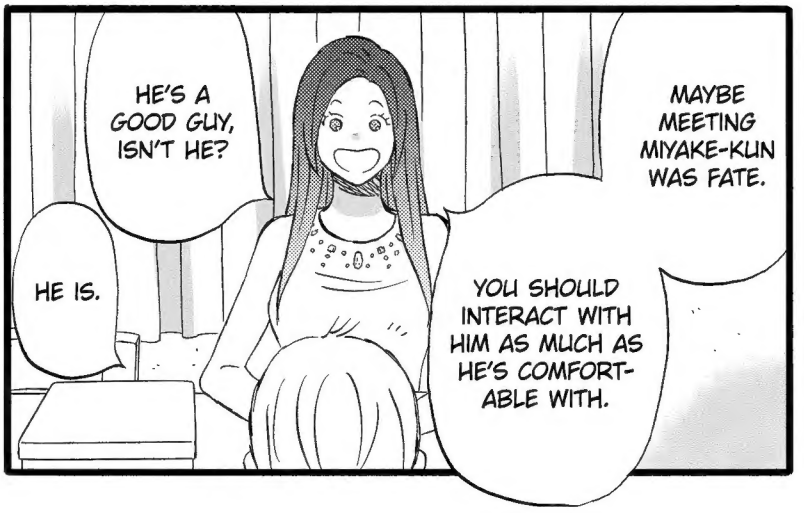

CONTENT...
IF YOU HAVE ROOM TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT OTHERS, IT MEANS YOU'RE CONTENT WITH YOUR OWN LIFE.
Ha ha!

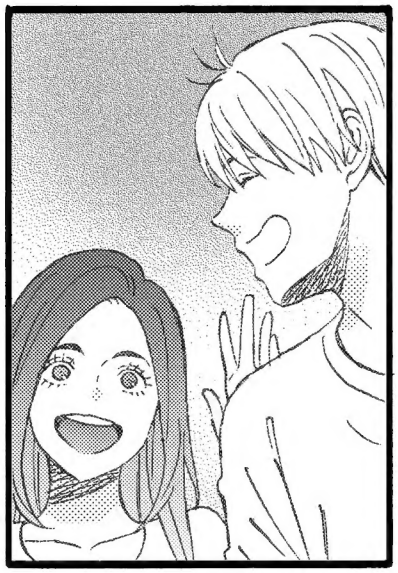

That's proof of a rich and fulfilled heart!
AS LONG AS I OVERLOOK THE COMPLETE LACK OF A SEX LIFE...
GLOOM...

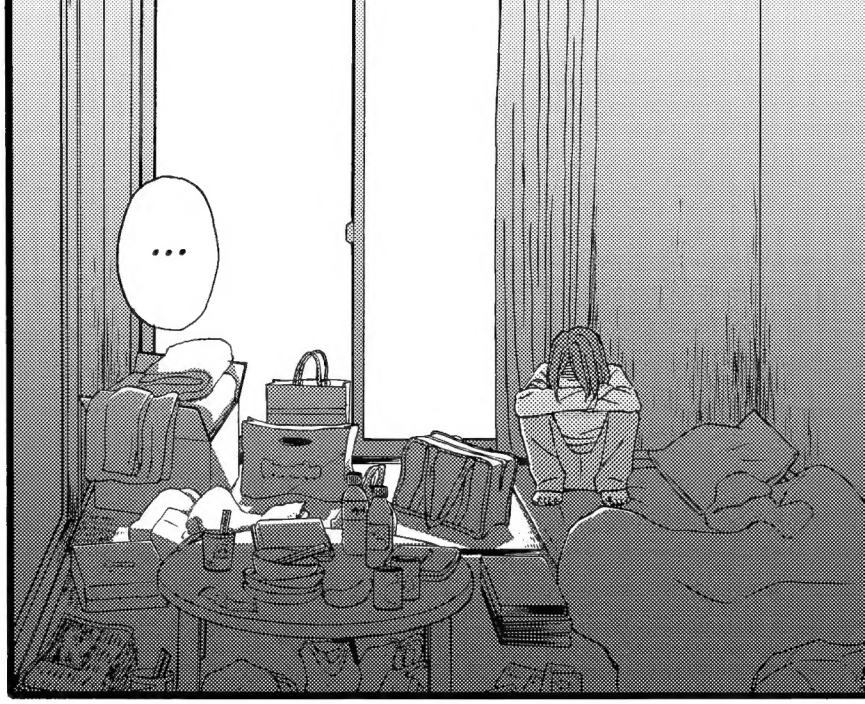

THAT MIGHT BE TRUE...



I REALLY HOPE HE COMES AGAIN.

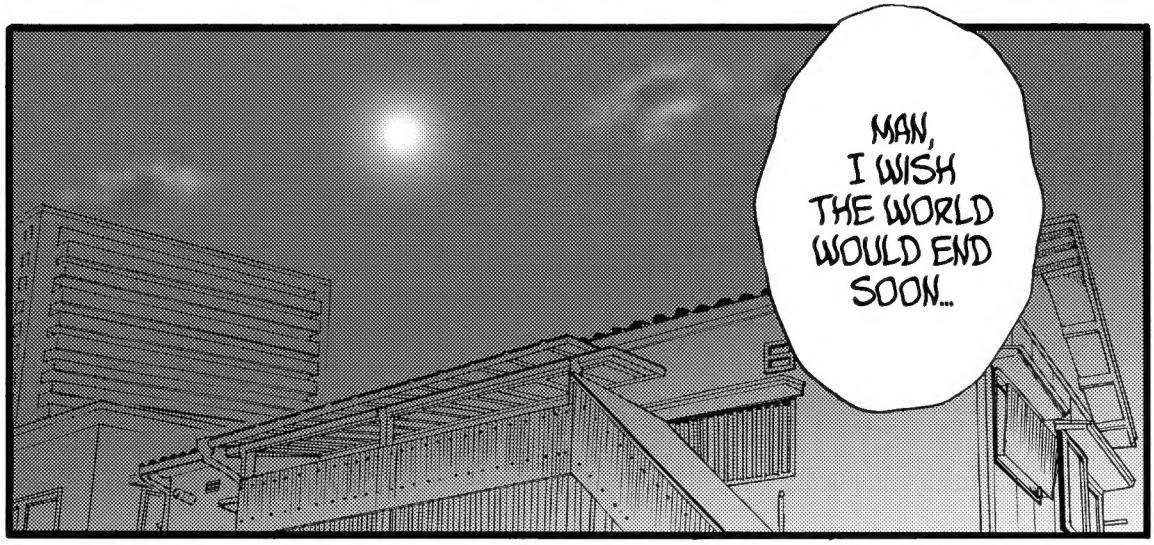

HE'S A GOOD GUY, ISN'T HE?
HE IS.
MAYBE MEETING MIYAKE-KUN WAS FATE.
YOU SHOULD INTERACT WITH HIM AS MUCH AS HE'S COMFORTABLE WITH.




...

...IT MAKES ME WANT TO PUKE.

THOSE TWO SEEMED LIKE NICE PEOPLE.


MAN, I WISH THE WORLD WOULD END SOON...